

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated September 18, 2006, Applicants elect Group I, Species A (i.e., claims 1-7, 13, 20, and 31) without traverse. The Examiner asserts that Species A includes claims 2-7. The Examiner further asserts that claims 1, 13, 20, and 31 are generic. The Examiner further asserts that claim 31 links Inventions I and IV. Accordingly, Applicants submit that by electing Group I, Species A, claims 1-7, 13, 20, and 31 are proper for examination on the merits.

Applicants note that the Office Action dated September 18, 2006 was issued subsequent to an Office Action dated August 29, 2006, and in response to a telephone call between the Examiner and Applicants' representative on or about September 7, 2006. In the telephone call, the Office Action dated August 29, 2006, and particularly, its lack of proper indication of generic and linking claims, was discussed. Although the Office Action dated September 18, 2006 does not explicitly say so, Applicants assume that the Office Action dated September 18, 2006 supersedes the previous Office Action and restarts the time period for reply. In any event, Applicants submit that this response is properly responsive to either or both Office Actions, and respectfully request examination on the merits.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below, if needed.

Respectfully submitted,
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